

Importance of salesmanship in carrying out duties



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Front desk job of any hotel is very important from hotel sales point of view. Marketing and sales department is called revenue generator. Front desk job is part of the marketing department so it's directly linked with revenue generation activities of a hotel. An employee working as front desk employee is having direct interaction with the guests. So it becomes very important for that employee to have all the chief characteristics of a good salesperson.

A good sales person can convert first time guest in to repeat business guest by make him or happy and achieve customer satisfaction. This is the hospitality and customer demand only that can be kept in mind while handling customers at front desk that will bring customer satisfaction. Desired hospitality and less cumbersome process of check in and checkout will bring customer satisfaction. Working as a Front office manager or staff, first of all he or she should consider the available resources of the hotel concerned which need to be focused to the materialization of the business.

Good salesmanship is all about selling own product with acceptance of the customers. Whatever product one have a good salesperson will sale that product and make feel to the customers that this is the right product he was looking for. This is simply quality of a sales person that he or she will find out the budget of a customer while conversation and offer the product that give within the budget feel to the customer. While conversation it is the quality of a salesperson to explain the facilities of the product to the customer that will again give feel of the right product customer was looking for. Abbey J. R (1998)

Customer relationship management is new concept in the field of any business. So it is the quality of a good salesmanship that helps in effective implementation and management of customer relationship in the hotel organization. In this competitive world getting new business is big challenge so hotel organization believes in repeated business from the same clientele. With the help of knowledge and smartness in work of a salesperson management of customer relationship is possible. These days it is being managed by ecommerce so knowledge of ecommerce to the front desk employee can be added quality of a good salesmanship and it will bring the business from existing clientele.

If an organization utilizes the available resources properly, Implementation of yield management will makes major changes in the hotel. It will bring maximum market shares of the city concerned. Guest generally always looks for the comfortable stay and the luxury facilities for their money. It is the quality that always speaks better than any other advertisement. So if front desk employee gives proper feedback to the hotel, hotel can maintains the quality towards the tariff and the interiors which will bring the maximum revenue within a short period. So it is the benefits of the good salesmanship. So as conclusion author would like to say that good salesmanship is very important while performing duty of front office department of hotel industry because it helps hotel not only to get good business but maintaining relationship with customers and feedback to the hotel for up gradation of its quality of product and services as well.

Q. 1 (2) Explain, with examples what selling techniques you might use when checking in a guest.

Overall selling technique is depends upon salesmanship and kind of guest but in general a front desk person has to apply his or her selling skill keeping in mind normal procedure of checkin. Selling techniques for checking guest is nothing but quality of a good salesperson. A salesperson should be very friendly and caring to the guest so that customer will be satisfied. Sales person should use up sell technique first while explaining price of the available rooms, followed by prestigious pricing and cut rate pricing. Along with these salesperson should explain how brilliant the facilities are within the room to justify the price of the room.

There may be a case that same room can be sold at different price. It is the duty of a good salesperson to find out the level of desire of the customer for the product he or she is asking for and charge price accordingly. During heavy demand of the accommodation it is totally depends upon front desk employee-salesperson to maximize the yield of accommodation by selling the same product at different prices as per the customer profile and need. Being a good salesman a front office employee can suggest various pricing techniques-top down pricing, prestigious pricing, cut rate pricing etc, to the hotel to maximize its yield. So it is the quality of a salesperson to identify and recognize the level of demand and ability of a customer to pay for the same accommodation and fixed the price accordingly. Abbey J. R (1998)

For example if there is arrival of guest first of all front desk person should handle the guest with friendly approach, asking for the kind of room looking for then explain the kind of room available with its pricing. First of all

salesperson should try to sell the room at higher price then depending upon the negotiation skill of the salesperson and budget of the customer price can be prestigious or if required and supported by the market sentiment it can be cut rate price be fixed. After this negotiation skill guest should be registered and room should be assigned promptly. As per the situation if needed guest will be assisted in completing registration process. Then there will be verification of method of payment to be made by the guest-whether cheque, cash, card or payment by company etc. will is known by conversation and then there will be escort to the guest till the room.

Q. 2. Discuss the type of check in system that you would expect to see at the turner Hotel.

Hotel Turner is a big chain of Hotel with 297 rooms hotel located in Central London. It is part of a well reputed group of hotels with 12 hotels running successfully in London and other major European cities. 42% of its clientele is corporate. Only 8% and 14% amount to walk-ins and leisure guests respectively. For this type of hotel, front office system should enable reception staff to maintain track of all bookings, state of rooms, guest details and charges. It should be efficient in coordinating restaurant reservations for guests, plan housekeeping duties and process guest check-in and check-out as per the market segmentation. Hotel Turner would also require a system that should provide a means to communicate effectively with all travel agents and activity operators linked to the online reservation system.

Hospitality management systems are the applications/ modules that smoothens a hospitality business. From the room service system in a restaurant, to online reservation and an easy and fast check in procedure, it

enables efficient communication and management of operation, eventually growing business and revenue. (www. wikianswers. com)

Features that Hotel Turner should look out for includes:

Reports for arrivals & departures on a specific date.

Guest ledger and reservation details, including activities and special requests.

Room rates, discounts, package deals, group bookings, etc.

Visual schematic of hotel rooms and status.

Visual schematic of calendar with room availability.

Facility for printing check-in cards for guests.

Flexibility in re-assigning guests to different room.

Facility to easily add charges to rooms from restaurants, spa, gift shop, etc.

Incorporate all payment options upon check-out and print receipt.

Print work roster for staff Facilities for storing guest history

Communicate efficiently with reservation and travel agents

Hotel Turner should have a system that can be efficiently used for online reservation system. This type of software package is essential as per the hotel's cancellation and Guarantee policy. It will help in increasing direct online bookings instantly. Prospective guests can view hotel rooms (size,

choice of beds), availability and prices, plus services and facilities offered. The systems should have instant confirmation of credit card payments or other secure online payment method. After payment of deposit and confirmation by email, guests should be able to login to view or change their reservation details. Cancellation policies should be stated, airport transport options mentioned.

How would the check in procedures differ when dealing with?

(a) A guest with a reservation

Usually guest check in procedure for reserved guest and chance guest is same except for slight variations. Check in procedures for a guest with a reservation will be as follows:

Receive the guest with a smile, and greet according to the time.

Check if he/she is holding reservation

Get the guest registration card and fill it up with all the necessary and required details of the guest.

Fill up the key and the welcome card

If the guest is a foreigner, get the C form and fill it up.

Allot the accommodation

Fill the arrival register

Make information slips and send them to telephones, room service and housekeeping

Open guest folio

In case of VIP, CIP etc inform all the departments

Lastly inform the bellboys to carry the luggage and escort the guest to the room and wish a comfortable stay in the hotel.

Typically pre registered guests or guest with reservation only need to verify information collected by reservations agents during the reservations process. They only need to verify information already entered onto a registration card and provide a valid signature in the appropriate place on the registration card. On the other hand, chance guest or walk in guest needs to fill the pre-registration card at the time of check in.

Pre registration also involves room and rate assignment and creation of guest folio apart from producing registration card.

The registration process can be divided into six steps

Pre registration activity

Creating the registration record

Assigning the room and the rate

Establishing method of payment

Issuing the room key

Fulfilling the special requests

(b) A “ chance” guest

In the case when guest is a chance guest the process of check in would almost be same except some cases. Like as guest is a chance guest so there will be no earlier reservation done for the guest so in this case first of all as process front desk person should check for availability of rooms and there will be efforts to create room for him or her. Rest of the process like fill up the key and allotting the accommodation escorting till the room will be similar. There may be a case that in case of a chance guest a front desk employee has to utilize his or her negotiation skill for the price of the room as per the level of need of the room by the guest. This is the skill of the employee to materialized the opportunities then and there. So overall the difference in check in procedures for a guest with a reservation and a chance guest is not much the only thing is role of a front desk person becomes very important because while negotiation and first interaction a materialization of an opportunity depends.

Q. 4. Explain the necessity of overbooking and its legal implications in relation to Turner Hotel.

The term overbooking is concerned with a situation which shows booking of the room have done excessively than the actual available room with the hotel. In general hotel does this because of reaching 100% occupancies. Hotel books over rooms than the available one with historic information and trend which includes unexpected cancellation. It is the synonyms of over commitment and oversold.

No show has been a major cause of concern for the hotels worldwide. It amounts to major loss of revenue. However, no-shows and early departures still cost hotels money. The reservation guarantee through credit cards compensates hotels for one night's stay in the case of a no-show, but the hotel still needs to make up for a revenue loss if that no-show guest had a multiple-night reservation. (<http://www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals>)

Because of this panorama of no-shows and early departures, the hotel turner must unavoidably engage in some level of overbooking to help ensure that those potentially unsold rooms are filled. As we all know, however, hoteliers who overbook might have to walk guests after the hotel is full. (<http://www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals>)

Overbooking is another important element of the revenue management or yield management. Hotels overbook to redeem for customer cancellations and no-shows. For this reason, it is obligatory to forecast cancellations and no-shows. Insufficient overbooking results in unsold inventory; on the other hand excessive overbooking results in penalty cost which includes both the financial remuneration given to bumped customers and the prospective loss of future revenue due to customer dissatisfaction. The optimal level of overbooking is where the anticipated cost of overbooking for the next unit to be sold is equal to the expected marginal revenue from that unit.

(International encyclopedia of hospitality management by Abraham Pizam)

Most legal authorities agree that when overbooking results in walking a guest, a breach of contract occurs. Under certain circumstances, it may constitute fraud or misrepresentation as well. In addition, certain

overbooking practices are likely to fall under the ambit of state consumer protection statutes prohibiting unfair and deceptive acts and practices. While the hotel industry attempts to portray overbooking as an economic necessity and legitimizes the process by attempts to provide guests with alternative accommodations, the hotels have failed to address the true effect and implicit costs association with the practice. Primarily because it is left to the individual state authority's to regulate the industry. (<http://legaldefinition.us>)

As far as Turner Hotel is concerned from the view point of overbooking, it is advisable not to go for overbooking because there will be breach of contract between hotel and its guests. But from the view point of business and maximizing revenue, it the only way to proceed little aggressively to achieve 100% occupancy. This is because after advance booking there is chances of cancellation of reservation as well, even if payment has been made in advance hotel organization has to bear loss for the foregone opportunities in case of booking not done. So keeping in mind these thing and profit maximization it can be done equal to the normal trend of cancellation. Hotel Turner must find a room for everyone who has a reservation and shows up on time to save themselves from any legal complications.

Q. 5 a) Explain the benefits to a hotel of accepting group bookings?

Group booking is simply acceptance of bulk business. In group bookings both the parties-customers as well as hotel be benefitted. Customer got benefit of low rates of the rooms due to the bulk booking and on the other hand hotel gets bulk business at a time so even at a less room cost per person hotel

welcome this kind of deal to get instant business and achieves its 100% occupancies.

A group reservation is for a block of rooms in a hotel. The block of rooms can be for a convention, a meeting, a special event, a tour group (as in present case of hotel turner), or various other reasons. A group reservation can be as small as 5 rooms to thousand rooms depending on the size of the hotel. Usually every hotel has different norms and parameters for considering a booking as group booking, which generally depends on the number of rooms booked.

By booking rooms in large quantities, the group receives a lower rate. Hotel is benefitted in this as they get business in bulk and their occupancy percentage increases giving them a competitive edge over their competitors. Group booking also makes the reservation process easy and hassle free for both; the guest as well as the front office associates. Usually when a group reservation is made a code is generated which is specific to that group and each reservation should include this code. To ensure that reservations get coded to the proper group and that correct rates are offered, the person taking the reservation should always inquire if the guest is part of that particular group.

Bulk booking is beneficial to the hotel that is similar to any other business organization where organization gets benefits of bulk business. It is the deal that gives instant cash but per head cost becomes cheaper for the customer and organization both. But from organization point of view it is the instant cash that attracts bulk business and so to the hotel organizations.

Other benefit of bulk booking is that there will be less chances of cancellation. In case of individual business if there is cancellation of the booking it is completely loss to the hotel organization because rooms are very highly perishable products. But chances of this kind of loss due to cancellation is very less because of concrete plan of the entire group. In group bookings even if one or two persons are not coming there will be almost no impact to the business because of the compact deal for the entire group-this may depends upon case to case, but bulk booking definitely good for the hotel organization.

Q. 5 b) what factors should the turner Hotel Front Office manager consider when deciding whether to accept the reservation request from Excelsior Tours?

Group revenue management is evolving quickly. Revenue managers typically set guidelines for size and rate objectives based upon projected demand for higher - valued transient demand. These criterions should be regularly reviewed and revised in hotel Turner. Even if a group request falls outside the preset parameters of the hotel, managers should still evaluate the request. (<http://tutor2u.net/economics/revision-notes/a2-micro-price-discrimination.html>)

The basic objective of revenue management is to maximize yields.

Acceptance of group bookings would be a great contribution towards achieving the basic objective of revenue management. So first of all Front office Manager of turner hotel should consider the objective of maximizing revenue of the hotel so keeping in mind this objective he or she should accept the offered group bookings.

While deciding whether to accept the reservation request of 40 double occupancy rooms for 3 nights 4 days from Excelsior Tours, Hotel Turner should look into the room rate, which is currently GBP 300 on single occupancy.

Among the major advances in Revenue Management technology is the incorporation of demand price- responsiveness for any property at any time period and for any market segment, including group.

Other than the group being considered, front office manager must consider that this hotel might only have transient demand for these three days. Assuming that even if the forecasted demand shows that hotel can pick up 145 transient rooms each day at an average rate of GBP 320, which would give the 95% occupancy. Considering these assumed factors we can plot a line that shows incremental contribution at any given price point. From this hypothetical analysis, one can see that there will be break even (no profit no loss situation) with the group at a GBP 230 rate, and that one could generate an incremental contribution. This approach says all about the factors of accepting a group at a requested rate.

Some of the information is required to decide whether group booking should be accepted or not? This information is present occupancy level of the hotel. This information would have very helpful in deciding the acceptance of the deal.